

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING COACH SEAN DESAI

HON. RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 1, 2021

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor Coach Sean Desai, the first person of South Asian and Indian heritage to attain the elite position of Defensive Coordinator in the National Football League (NFL). Sean's trailblazing ascent with the Chicago Bears football team serves as a shining example of what South Asian and Indian-Americans can achieve in our nation and in professional sports.

Coach Desai was born in Shelton, Connecticut and attended Boston University, where he majored in Philosophy and Political Science and graduated Cum Laude in 2004. He then earned a master's degree in higher and postsecondary education from Columbia University, and a doctorate in educational administration from Temple University. Postdoctorate, Coach Desai served as an adjunct professor at Temple and Defensive and Special Teams' Coordinator for the Temple Owls football team. He joined the University of Miami as Assistant Director of Football Operations in 2011 and spent the 2012 season as the Running Backs' Coach and Special Teams' Coordinator at Boston College.

In 2013, Coach Desai was hired by the Chicago Bears as a Quality Control Assistant, working with defensive backs and linebackers while assisting the special teams' coaches. Coach Desai held this position until 2018, when he was promoted to Safeties Coach. His colleagues attribute Coach Desai's meteoric rise to his experience as an educator and his ability to connect with his players. In his own words:

The ability to develop and have a chance to lead young men and bring them past what they can do . . . opened my eyes to a whole new world of education. To me, that's what an educator has to do—whatever you are teaching . . . I mean, if you're not out there to develop and help bring kids to a place that they can't be on their own, then I don't know what the purpose of education is.

Racial biases have thwarted upward mobility for men and women of color since the NFL's inception in 1920. As the first South-Asian and Indian-American Defensive Coordinator in the NFL, Coach Desai will inspire young men and women of all ethnicities and races to believe that they can and should aspire to positions of leadership in professional sports.

As a die-hard Chicago Bears fan, I am thrilled to congratulate Coach Sean Desai on his remarkable achievement with the Bears and the trail he is blazing for future generations. I wish him great success in his new role and in his future endeavors. Let's Go Bears!

CONGRATULATING DEREK BERGSTEN OF ROCKFORD FOR RECEIVING THE "FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR" AWARD FROM THE ILLINOIS FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 1, 2021

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Derek Bergsten for winning the Fire Chief of the Year Award from the Illinois Fire Chiefs Association. This honor recognizes an exemplary fire chief who makes "significant ongoing contributions" to the profession and who was a full-time chief serving a city of more than 25,000 people.

After joining the Rockford Fire Department in 1994, Derek worked his way through the ranks to become a Captain. In 2007, he was named chief, becoming just the 10th chief in department history since 1880. During his time he created a mobile integrated health program that has worked to reduce visits to area emergency rooms, hospital admissions, and ambulance calls. Derek is responsible for the success of departmental accreditation through the Center for Public Safety Excellence, Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services, and Accreditation for Government Fleet Management Services. He expanded the certified fire vehicle repair shop operated by the department to reduce down time for fire equipment across the region while creating revenue. He also created a program that allows Rockford fire personnel to transport patients experiencing a mental health issue to the Rosecrance Mulberry Center for evaluation rather than a potentially stressful emergency room. In order to prevent overdose deaths, he created a program that provides Naloxone kits and training to the families of those who have overdosed, driving down the number of opioid overdose deaths. Derek is the first Fire Chief from our region chosen for this honor in over forty years. I commend him on his work to better the Rockford community through his job as a fire chief.

It is because of leaders such as Derek Bergsten that I am especially proud to serve Illinois' 17th Congressional District. Madam Speaker, I would like to again formally recognize Derek Bergsten for winning the Fire Chief of the Year Award.

LEXINGTON MEDICAL CENTER
50TH ANNIVERSARY PROCLAMATION

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 1, 2021

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, Lexington Medical Center celebrated its 50th anniversary in January 2021.

From starting as a small community hospital in 1971 to becoming the anchor of a modern medical complex today, the hospital's mission is to provide quality health services that meet the needs of the community.

In 1966, voters approved a referendum for the hospital, creating the biggest development project ever in Lexington County. A gracious donation of more than 22 acres of land from the Hulon family provided the site in West Columbia.

On January 6, 1971, Lexington County Hospital, as it was first called, a four-story building a fraction of the size of the hospital today, opened. There were 125 beds and 250 employees.

Over the years, Lexington Medical Center has emerged as a leader in health care. It grew steadily into a large health care organization with a wide variety of services.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Lexington Medical Center pioneered community medical centers throughout Lexington County, created the Lexington Medical Center Foundation, began operating a skilled nursing facility and Alzheimer's care center, and established a physician network with a variety of medical specialties.

In the early 2000s, Lexington Medical Center added a new tower to its campus along with medical office buildings.

In 2012, Lexington Medical Center began providing a full range of heart services including open heart surgery and therapeutic cardiac catheterizations. Since then, Lexington Medical Center's heart program has established itself as a national leader in cardiac care, earning a three-star rating—the highest rating possible—from The Society of Thoracic Surgeons, and becoming one of only 30 hospitals in the United States to receive a HeartCARE™ Center National Distinction of Excellence from the American College of Cardiology.

In 2019, Lexington Medical Center completed the largest hospital expansion in South Carolina history when it opened its new patient care tower.

Today, Lexington Medical Center has 557 beds, four community medical centers, 70 physician practices and more than 7,000 employees. The network also has an occupational health center and the largest skilled nursing facility in the Carolinas. Lexington Medical Center operates one of the busiest Emergency departments in South Carolina, treating nearly 90,000 patients each year. The hospital delivers approximately 4,000 babies each year, performs more than 27,000 surgeries and has more than 1,000,000 physician office visits.

Lexington Medical Center has received local and national awards for its outstanding patient care.

As the only locally owned, independent hospital in the Midlands, Lexington Medical Center strives to offer the most outstanding care to our families, friends and neighbors now and in the future.

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